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KENTUCKY-BLUEGRASS SEED CROP  
REPORTED LARGEST IN 5 YEARS

The 1947 production of cured bluegrass seed was forecast today by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics at 3,780,000 bushels. This would be the largest crop in 5 years, nearly  $2 \frac{3}{4}$  times the very small crop of last year, and 44 percent larger than the 1941-45 average. Heavy rain and floods in many bluegrass-seed producing sections during the first three weeks of June, and late spring freezes in a few sections held production this year below the 1937 record of 5.5 million bushels. It is possible, however, that more seed than now estimated was or will be obtained from fields under water or too soft to permit stripping of seed when other fields were harvested. Furthermore, the fact that by the end of June no stripping or heading of bluegrass had been reported in the main producing sections of Minnesota and North Dakota, added to the uncertainty of forecasting production this year.

Record high prices for bluegrass seed during the spring and probably record low stocks held by dealers stimulated harvesting activity. More strippers were in operation than ever before.

Stripping began about a week later than last year and also a week later than usual, and was interrupted frequently by rains. Bad weather also made curing more difficult than in a number of years.

Shrinkage in curing may average a little higher this year than last because of the moisture in much of the green seed and larger amount of undergrowth gathered with the seed. However, pastures and meadows were rather free from weeds and bluegrass heads appeared to be heavier than last year, which would tend to reduce the shrinkage in curing and increase the recovery or thresh-out of recleaned seed from cured seed. The percentage of clean 21-pound seed is expected to be larger than in 1946, but below the 5-year average of 49.8 percent.

Prices to growers for green seed averaged about 3 cents a pound, compared with about 8 cents last year. Cured-seed prices for the 1947 crop were not established by the end of June. Season-average prices per bushel for cured seed average \$2.70 in Kentucky and \$3.60 in the Western District last year, compared with the 5-year average of \$1.00 and \$1.37.

Quantities of bluegrass and other field seeds held by dealers on June 30, 1947, will be reported about August 8.

Kentucky, Indiana, and Ohio: Production of cured bluegrass seed in Kentucky, Indiana, and Ohio this year is estimated at 750,000 bushels compared with 219,000 bushels in 1946 and the 1941-45 average of 261,800 bushels. The outturn this year apparently fell well below early forecasts of dealers. This is attributed to more undergrowth than usual, late freezes, inability to get strippers when needed, and lighter seed than expected. Many more acres were stripped this year than last. Yields reported by growers averaged about 10 bushels of cured seed compared with about 6 bushels last year and the 5-year average of 6.2 bushels. Some stripping began on June 3, but the average date reported was June 8,

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compared with June 2 last year and the 5-year average of June 7. It continued until about June 20. Recovery of clean (21-pound) seed from cured seed in the three States is expected to average close to 35 percent, compared with 30.7 percent last year and the 5-year average of 36.8 percent. Most growers in Kentucky received 50 cents a bushel (about 3 1/2 cents a pound) for green seed, compared with about \$1 a bushel (about 7 cents a pound) last year.

Western District: The 1946 production of cured bluegrass seed in the Western District is forecast at 3,030,000 bushels, compared with only 1,186,000 last year and the 1941-45 average of 2,368,200 bushels. A larger crop this year than last is indicated for the following States in this district; Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, and possibly Wisconsin and Illinois. Because stripping and curing were late, judging the quantity of cured seed and the recovery of clean seed is more difficult than usual. The settled weather from June 23 to 29 was of great assistance in stripping and curing operations. Prior to then, however, there was rain almost every day.

Stripping began about June 16 in Missouri, June 21 in Iowa, and June 26 in Nebraska. In Minnesota, stripping in central and northern areas was not expected to begin until about July 4, depending upon the weather and the transportation of strippers from earlier States. Stripping in Minnesota may continue until July 20. Shrinkage in curing of this year's crop in the Western District may be about the same as last year, or a little larger, but recovery or thresh-out is expected to be about 5 points better than the below-average recovery of 40.5 percent last year largely because of the heavier seed this year. Pastures and meadows in this District were unusually free from weeds. Although much seed may be stained because of rains at stripping and curing time, weight and purity of the seed should be above average.